

his results to the *English Mechanic*. In 1898, on the death of his father, Mrs. Besley came to live with her sons in London, and a house was taken adjoining the north side of Clapham Common; here the greater part of his astronomical work was accomplished. In 1900 he was appointed Director of the Meteor Section of the British Astronomical Association, having joined the Association in 1896, and having then applied himself with good effect to variable star and meteor observations; and he held this office until in April 1905 he was compelled by increasing ill-health to resign it.

Mr. Besley was elected a Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society in January 1902, and was at first an occasional attendant at its meetings, but in the last two years, chiefly on account of illness, he was unable to be present. In spite of attempts to recruit his health by visits to his native Devonshire—where his time was chiefly taken up in editing meteoric observations—his condition gradually became more serious, and on the 29th of June 1905, at the early age of 27 years, this devoted and able observer passed away.

[The Council are indebted to Professor A. S. Herschel for the above particulars.]

GEORGE COX BOMPAS was born on the 18th of April 1827, being the second son of the late Serjeant Bompas. He was educated privately, and was admitted as a solicitor in 1850, continuing to practise till 1903. He married in 1860 Mary Anne Scott Buckland, daughter of the Rev. Wm. Buckland, Dean of Westminster. From an early period Mr. Bompas took an interest in astronomy; his special studies were on periodic meteor showers, and he latterly devoted his attention to the Zodiacal Light and the solar motion in space. He was elected a Fellow of the Society on the 14th of December 1894; he was also a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society, the Geological Society, the Palæontological Society, and other institutions. He died on the 23rd of May 1905, after a long illness, leaving a widow and four children.

EVERARD HOME ROBERTS COLEMAN was born in London in January 1818. Like his father before him, he was educated at Christ's Hospital. He was one of the forty boys in the Mathematical School, a branch of the Hospital founded by Charles II. with the view of training lads for the Navy. An interesting occurrence of his school days was a visit of the King (William IV.), the Queen, and Princess Victoria, when his Majesty's attention was attracted by a drawing by young Coleman of the island of St. Helena. The King took it from the boy's hands, and, after explaining it to the royal party, asked to be allowed to keep it. Soon afterwards Coleman received from the King an appointment in the Admiralty, and five years later was transferred to the Record and Registry Office for Shipping and Seamen, where he became

Assistant Registrar, an office which he held till his retirement seventeen years ago. He was well known as an archæologist and antiquarian, was the oldest living member of the London and Middlesex Archæological Society, and one of the original contributors to *Notes and Queries*; he was also a Fellow of the Royal Geographical and Historical Societies. Though of a retiring disposition, he took an interest in public affairs in connection with the district of St. Pancras, in which he lived, and in local charitable institutions.

He died on the 28th of January 1906, at the age of 88, and leaves a widow, a daughter, and seven sons. With one exception Mr. Coleman was the oldest Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society, having been elected in June 1853.

RALPH COPELAND was born on the 3rd of September 1837, at Moorside Farm, near Woodplumpton, in Lancashire, and while still a child lost his father. He received his first instruction from a handloom weaver, who taught his pupils while working at his loom, until he at the age of about eight years proceeded to the grammar school of Kirkham. In 1853 he went to Australia and spent five years in the colony of Victoria, most of the time on a sheep run at the foot of the Australian Alps, though he was also for some time infected by the then raging mania for gold digging and made his way to the wild Omeo district. In after years Copeland was always fond of recalling incidents from this stirring period of his life, and it is much to be regretted that he could never be persuaded to write down his reminiscences, as they would have formed most entertaining reading.

Rough as the life was which he led during these five years, Copeland did not neglect to cultivate his mind, and it was during that time that he became deeply interested in astronomy. At his request his mother sent him a small telescope, and by means of this and a few popular books he made his first acquaintance with the heavens. Finally his thirst for knowledge decided him to leave Australia, and he started for home in the summer of 1858 in a clipper *via* Cape Horn. On the voyage he made experiments as to the visibility of stars in daylight in the tropics, and succeeded in keeping *Jupiter*, and even *Sirius*, in sight until the Sun showed above the horizon; but after glancing at the Sun he was unable to find *Sirius* again, though he succeeded in picking up *Jupiter* for a short time.* He also followed with close attention the appearance and rapid development of Donati's Comet. He had wished to enter Cambridge University, but had to give up this plan and eventually entered the works of Beyer, Peacock & Co., locomotive engineers, of Manchester, as a volunteer-apprentice. Here he carried on the study of the stars commenced in Australia, and was fortunate enough to find

* See *Copernicus*, vol. iii. p. 204.